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Mexico proceeded to enforce its claim to 200 mile jurisdiction over tuna following the breakdown of negotiations on a multilateral tuna regime for the eastern Pacific. Mexico's seizure of six US tuna boats in July, 1980 resulted in a legislatively mandated US embargo on tuna imports from Mexico, potentially valued at \$50 million annually. Several vessels have been seized since 1980, most recently in July, 1983. In the absence of an agreement assuring US tuna boats access to the zone claimed by Mexico, the embargo remains in effect.

Recently, we concluded a regional tuna licensing agreement with Panama and Costa Rica that will enter into force upon ratification by five coastal nations of the region. Were Mexico to accede to this agreement, the tuna embargo could be lifted. The Mexicans, who are apparently uninterested in joining the agreement at the present time, presented their position for reaching a separate tuna fishing agreement during Secretary Shultz's visit to Mexico in April. The Mexican negotiating position is unacceptable to the USG, and any effort to negotiate a separate agreement prior to ratification of the regional agreement would undercut the latter.

Thus, the U.S. and Mexico remain locked in their dispute over highly migratory tuna. The U.S believes that tunafishing can be effectively managed only by multilateral agreement. The U.S. position is contained in the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976 (MFCMA), and it is confirmed by the recent Presidential Proclamation establishing an Exclusive Economic Zone. Ambassador Gavin is working directly with the Mexicans in an effort to move the U.S. and Mexico closer to a solution to the tuna problem.

July 29, 1983

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State Dept. review completed